



**MINUTES FROM THE UNITED VETERANS' GROUPS OF OREGON (UVGO)  
MEETING  
SATURDAY, 11 APRIL 2026  
HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

The meeting was called to order by the **Chair, Mary J. Mayer**, at **1200**. She then led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided the Invocation.

**Roll Call of Organizations/Voting Members: 9 of 14 Present:**

- **Regular Voting Members Present were:**

- AFA (Bill Tidd)
- DAV (Kari-Jo Parisi)
- KWVA (Mike Williamson)
- MOAA (Tom Majchrowski)
- MOPH (Todd Swanson)
- NCOA (Robert Haltiner)
- PVA TSC (Roger Titus)
- VFW (Anthony Barber)
- VVA (Don Homuth)

- **Regular Voting Members Absent were:**

- American Legion
- AUSA
- GSW
- Marine Corps League

- 40 + 8
- **Other Voting Members:**
  - UVGO Immediate Past Chair: Wayne Harvey (Not present)
- **Associate Member Present (Non-Voting):** DAV Auxiliary (Karen Haltiner)
- **UVGO Officers (non-voting, unless representing a regular member organization):**
  - Chair (Mary J. Mayer)
  - First Vice Chair (Andrea Summerlin)
  - Second Vice Chair (Todd Swanson)
  - Secretary (Marco Oswald)
  - Treasurer (Robert Haltiner)
- **Other Attendees were:**
  - Gayle Swanson (Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary)
  - Jay DeFillipo (ODVA Legislative Affairs Director)
  - Tammie L. Perrault, NW Regional Liaison, Department of Defense-State Liaison Office

#### **CHAIR'S COMMENTS:**

The **Chair, Mary J. Mayer**, welcomed all members and guests to the fourth regularly scheduled virtual UVGO meeting of the 2025-2026 program year. The Chair affirmed that our key objectives for the upcoming program year are focusing on our strategic goals: expanding the membership, increasing the visibility of the UVGO brand, inviting relevant guest speakers, and maintaining active legislative participation. Immediately preceding this regular UVGO meeting, the Chair hosted an executive strategy session with members of the UVGO Legislative Committee and UVGO leadership. The meeting helped focus on the issues for discussion today.

#### **SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

The role call was taken, and it was determined that the following organizations were represented: 9 of the 14 regular member organizations and one associate (non-voting) member organization.

The motion was made and seconded that the minutes of the 10 January 2026 UVGO Meeting be approved; the motion was passed unanimously.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Treasurer Robert Haltiner reported that the UVGO beginning balance as of 31 December 2025 was \$5,804.60. There were no income or expenses to note. The ending balance as of 2 April 2026 was **\$5,804.60**. Two member organizations should bring their membership dues current (MCL and 40+8).

#### **OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS (ODVA) UPDATE:**

The ODVA Director for Legislative Affairs, **Jay DeFillipo**, provided a quick update of ODVA current operations since the last UVGO meeting:

- Jay highlighted recent ODVA activities -- including participation in the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs Conference in Washington D.C. and a Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans Ceremony, where UVGO Chair Mary J. Mayer presented remarks.
- Jay discussed the agency's current focus on implementing legislation from the recent short session and preparing for the 2027 budget process.
- ODVA remains engaged regarding funding for the Roseburg Veterans Home, which remains an ODVA priority; however, it is near the bottom of the federal funding list.
- The update concluded with information about upcoming summer clinics and outreach programs, and a mention of the Beyond the Military Uniform website (<https://beyondthemilitaryuniform.com>) as a resource for Veterans.
- Regarding the recently concluded short legislative session, Jay reported on two significant bills that passed, the Omnibus Bill (HB 4132) which was signed into law on April 7th and HB 4099 regarding Veterans in Crisis. The omnibus bill originally requested 12 positions for ODVA; that number was reduced due to fiscal constraints, and the approved eight positions will be added sequentially in coming budget years.

#### **UVGO LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:**

- UVGO Legislative Coordinator, **Marco Oswald**, provided an update on the UVGO's involvement in the legislative process, highlighting: UVGO participation on a working group for the Omnibus Bill and the successful advocacy for both it and HB 4099, Veterans in Crisis.
- Marco discussed the benefit of UVGO representation on a new task force related to HB 4099. Chair Mayer requested volunteers with expertise in counselling and mentoring Veterans with mental health issues to serve on the committee. The group discussed the implementation challenges of the bill's aims across 36 counties in Oregon.

- ODVA **Jay DeFillipo** noted that, while the objectives of HB 4099 are noble, the September 2026 deadline for delivering a report is unrealistic; a more realistic goal would be the start of the biennium in December 2026.
- A task force involving ODVA, Oregon State Police, and OHA will be formed to develop the aims of HB 4099, with the UVGO expressing interest in participating pending appropriate representation.
- **Don Homuth**, who serves as the legislative assistant for the Oregon State Veterans' Caucus, shared his experience advocating for Veterans before the legislature. Don emphasized the importance of Veterans making phone calls to their representatives on significant issues and physically showing up at Senate and Representative Veterans committee hearings in order to be heard effectively.

#### GUEST SPEAKER:

- **Tammie L. Perreault**, Northwest Regional Liaison, presented on behalf of the Department of Defense State Liaison Office, outlining their key policy priorities for Oregon's 2027 legislative session. Her office works with state policymakers to change laws and policies to improve military family well-being.
- Her main focus areas included adding "military exigency" to the State of Oregon's paid leave program, improving K-12 educational support for military children, and implementing a Purple Star School program (a program that supports military-connected children as they relocate to new schools due to a parent's change in duty station).
- Tammie explained that while Oregon has a significant military population, with over 3,268 active duty servicemembers, it lacks the major military installations and the infrastructure found in neighboring Washington State and California. In addition, it lacks some supportive policies favoring the military family found in those two states. She outlined next steps, including working with state legislators, agencies, and stakeholders over the summer to develop and introduce legislation in 2027 that supports military families. An issue paper Tammie presented is attached to these minutes.
- Tammy discussed **occupational licensure compacts**, which create seamless licensure portability among states for all members of a profession, including military spouses and service members (35% of military spouses require an occupational license of some kind to engage in work of their

chosen profession). Tammie further explained that Oregon presents resistance from its medical licensure board to this concept, and she highlighted the benefits of adopting such compacts for military spouses and veterans. Tammie requested support from the UVGO by providing testimony in support of reform during future legislative hearings and emphasized the importance of Veteran voices in the legislative process.

- After discussion, UVGO membership agreed to remain in touch regarding legislative developments and potential sponsorship, with Marco as the primary point of contact for the UVGO. (Tammie and Marco conducted a subsequent Zoom coordination call on 22 April 2026 to discuss specific proposals and seek ways for the UVGO to be a force multiplier in future initiatives supporting the military family.)
- Tammy also mentioned that her office is collecting input for other policy priorities in 2028 through the Federal Register, a process that allows for full citizen input.

#### **CHAIR MAYER: UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Chair Mayer** led a meeting discussion regarding website updates, membership prospects, and upcoming events. The UVGO reviewed potential new members, including the Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary and the National Guard Association of the United States. The Chair announced plans to invite legislative representatives and speakers on Veterans courts to upcoming meetings. In addition, the group discussed introducing promotional items for UVGO, to raise awareness and enhance UVGO branding. **Roger Titus** from the PVA Tri-State Chapter volunteered to provide an update on wrist bands and QR code at the next meeting. UVGO has also acquired a banner for our participation in promotional conferences – thanks to **Bill Tidd**.

#### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- **Don Homuth** reported on the Vietnam Veterans of America Local Chapter 271's holiday meal kit program, which has expanded significantly in recent years; it will likely need to raise \$13,000-15,000 this year to support around 600 local veterans.
- **Marco Oswald** notified the group of a grant funding opportunity from the America 250 Oregon Commission, offering up to \$3,000 in grant funding on a first-come, first-served basis, opening on April 13th. One-half of the awards are designated for rural communities.

- The **Portland VA Medical Center** is having a host of upcoming events, including a health fair. Please check their website (<https://www.va.gov/portland-health-care/>).
- **Karen Haltiner** stated the DAV Annual Convention will be in Medford on May 2nd-3rd.
- **Robert Haltiner** stated that the NCOA as an organization has been discontinued, due to circumstances beyond its control. Robert also reminded the group of upcoming annual UVGO membership dues of \$55 for regular members and \$27.50 for auxiliary members, due by 1 July.
- **Mike Williamson** stated that Frank Wilson is now serving as commander of the Wilsonville Korean War Veterans Association, and Mike is serving as second in command.
- **Tony Barber** announced the **ONG** Run to Remember on May 16<sup>th</sup> in Salem, and on June 18-20 the VFW Oregon will have its annual convention in Salem.
- **Andrea Summerlin** announced the Patton Veterans Project in Florence from May 1st-3<sup>rd</sup>, an oral and video history project.
- MOAA Oregon Chapter Chair **Tom Majchrowski** reported that MOAA is having its annual Advocacy-in-Action event where MOAA delegates visit every Congressional office in Washington, DC to discuss a host of legislative proposals supporting Veterans, principally the Richard Starr Act.

#### **ACTION ITEMS/DUE OUTS:**

- **All members:** Identify and notify Mary or Marco if there are individuals (from UVGO or member organizations) interested and qualified to represent UVGO on the HB 4099 Veterans in Crisis Task Force; provide names quickly due to the rapid committee formation
- **Marco:** Submit UVGO's availability and interest in participating on the HB 4099 Task Force to ODVA and relevant parties, once qualified volunteers are identified
- **Mary:** Send Don Homuth's contact information to Tammie Perreault and facilitate follow-up meeting between Tammie, Don, and Marco

- **Don Homuth:** Provide personal email address to Tammie Perreault for ongoing coordination
- **Andrea:** Follow up with VFW Auxiliary Department president regarding potential UVGO membership
- **Mike Williamson:** Provide Mary with contact information (name, email, phone) for new KWVA president Frank Wilson and alternate representative
- **Todd:** Provide update to Mary on leadership changes for Military Order of the Purple Heart and its Auxiliary
- **All organization representatives:** Review UVGO website for accuracy of commander/leader information and report any needed updates or corrections to Mary
- **All organization treasurers:** Submit \$55 UVGO membership dues (or \$27.50 for auxiliaries) to Robert by July 1
- **Roger Titus:** Follow up with Don regarding UVGO promotional items (bracelets, QR code) and report back to Mary
- **All interested organizations:** Apply for America 250 Oregon Commission grants (up to \$3,000) starting April 13 at 9am, using link provided by Marco
- **All members:** Notify Mary or Marco of any potential new member organizations or suggested guest speakers for upcoming meetings
- **Mary:** Update website with correct email for Tony (Chaplain) and correct spelling of Cathy's name

**MEETING RECORD:** UVGO Meetings are recorded on Zoom. To request a copy of the recorded meeting, please contact the UVGO Secretary, Marco Oswald, at: [viaboeca17@gmail.com](mailto:viaboeca17@gmail.com)

The next **UVGO Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, 11 July 2026** from **1200** to **1400** via **Zoom Video Teleconference**. The meeting was adjourned at **1317**.

Respectfully submitted,

**MARCO OSWALD**  
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Reviewed by:

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